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(71) Applicant (for DE only): **PHILIPS INTELLECTUAL
PROPERTY & STANDARDS GMBH** [DE/DE]; Stein-
damm 94, 20099 Hamburg (DE).

(71) Applicant (for AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BE,
BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CY, CZ,
DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, FR, GB, GD, GE, GH,
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UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW only): **KONINKLIJKE
PHILIPS ELECTRONICS N.V.** [NL/NL]; Groenewoud-
seweg 1, NL-5621 BA Eindhoven (NL).

(72) Inventors; and

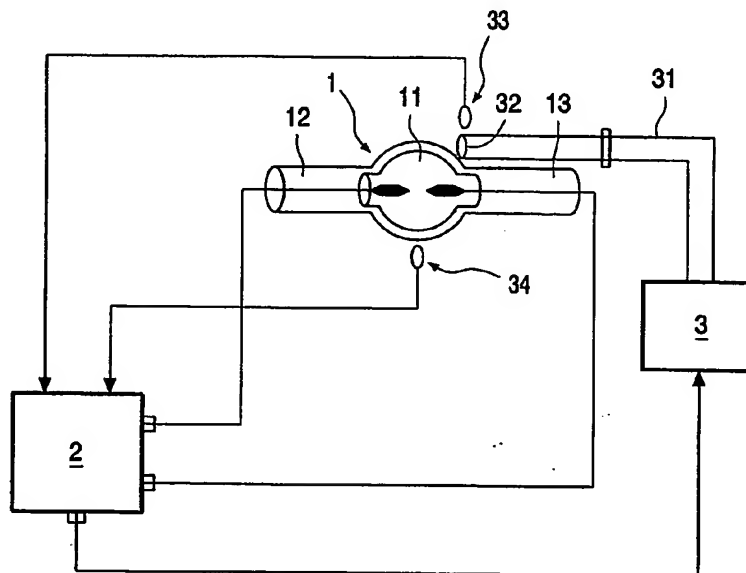
(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): **POLL-
MANN-RETSCH, Jens** [DE/DE]; c/o Philips Intellectual
Property & Standards GmbH, Weissshausstr. 2, 52066
Aachen (DE). **MOENCH, Holger** [DE/DE]; c/o Philips
Intellectual Property & Standards GmbH, Weissshausstr.
2, 52066 Aachen (DE). **MAES, Wouter, Jozef** [BE/DE];
c/o Philips Intellectual Property & Standards GmbH,
Weissshausstr. 2, 52066 Aachen (DE). **VERSTRAETEN,
Edmond, Mariette, Emile** [BE/DE]; c/o Philips Intellec-
tual Property & Standards GmbH, Weissshausstr. 2, 52066
Aachen (DE).

(74) Agent: **VOLMER, Georg**; Philips Intellectual Property &
Standards GmbH, Weissshausstr. 2, 52066 Aachen (DE).

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(54) Title: LIGHTING UNIT



(57) Abstract: A lighting unit is described which has a discharge lamp (1), in particular a high pressure or high intensity discharge (HID) lamp or an ultra high performance (UHP) lamp, a lamp driver (2) and a cooling device (3). To reduce mechanical stresses caused by temperature variations in the lamp (1), one or more operating parameters of the lamp (1) are detected. In addition, a control unit is provided for controlling the lamp driver (2) and/or the cooling device (3) at least during switching on and/or off of the lighting unit in such a way that there is no excursion from a predetermined range of the at least one operating parameter. By selecting the parameter range suitably, the service life of the lamp may be extended considerably or the power of the lamp may be increased while the service life remains the same.

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